DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 137 969 EA 009 448

AUTHOR Magruder, Donald R.
TITLE Involving the Public in the Bargaining Process: Some Strategies.
PUB DATE Mar 77
NOTE 14p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the National School Boards Association (37th, Houston, Texas, March 26-29, 1977)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Boards of Education; *Citizen Participation; *Collective Bargaining; Elementary Secondary Education; Employer Employee Relationship; Teachers; Unions
IDENTIFIERS *Fishbowl Bargaining; *Florida

ABSTRACT

Across the country citizens' and parents' groups have demanded participation in the collective bargaining process, which traditionally included only boards of education and teachers' union representatives meeting behind closed doors. The first state to require that bargaining in the public sector be conducted in the open (fishbowl bargaining) was Florida. Surveys show that a majority of Florida school board members and school superintendents favor fishbowl bargaining. Even 35 percent of the professional negotiators favor open collective bargaining. Teachers' unions are fervently opposed to it. Only a small percentage of the public has actually attended negotiating sessions. Media coverage in large school districts has been good, but it has been sparse in medium to small districts. As the citizens' movement grows, demands for greater participation in matters such as bargaining will increase, according to the author. (DS)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

P

SPEAKER Magruder, Donald R. CLINIC NO. C46 PROGRAM p. 38

CLINIC C-46

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

INVOLVING THE PUBLIC IN THE BARGAINING PROCESS: SOME STRATEGIES

DR. DON MAGRUDER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
FLORIDA SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION, INC.

ED137969

CITIZENS ARE SLOWLY WAKING UP TO THE FACT THAT 80% OF THE EDUCATION BUDGET AND THE QUALITY OF THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION IS SECRETLY BEING BARGAINED AWAY, BEHIND CLOSED DOORS. THEY ARE BECOMING AWARE OF THE FACT THAT CITIZEN INPUT AT A FINAL PUBLIC HEARING, WHEN SCHOOL BOARDS ADOPT THE CONTRACT SECRETLY ARRIVED AT, IS A FUTILE GESTURE. THEY KNOW THAT IT IS THEN TOO LATE FOR THEM TO REALLY HAVE A VOICE IN THE BARGAINING PROCESS. YOU ARE AWARE, OF COURSE, THAT PARENTS AND CITIZENS KNOW THAT SCHOOL BOARDS HAVE A REPUTATION OF GOING BEHIND CLOSED DOORS JUST WHEN EVERYTHING GETS INTERESTING. THAT'S THE REASON FOR THE IMMENSE POPULARITY OF "SUNSHINE LAWS" AROUND THE COUNTRY.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING, GROWING BY LEAPS AND BOUNDS IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR, HAS TRADITIONALLY INVOLVED NEGOTIATING BEHIND CLOSED DOORS - AND HAS INCLUDED TWO PARTIES - LABOR AND MANAGEMENT. THIS PRIVATE SECTOR MODEL OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING HAS BEEN ADOPTED BY ALL BUT TWO OF THE STATES HAVING COLLECTIVE BARGAINING LAWS - FLORIDA AND MINNESOTA.

WHEN THE LABOR MOVEMENT DECIDED TO MOVE INTO EDUCATION, LABOR LEADERS FAILED TO ANTICIPATE THE LONG RANGE EFFECT. WHEN THEY

EA 009 118

CONCENTRATED ON THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH WHICH TO ADVANCE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING, THEY GREATLY STIMULATED THE PUBLIC TO GAIN AN INTEREST IN WHAT THE PARTIES ARE AGREEING TO - THE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND FUTURES OF MILLIONS OF YOUNG PEOPLE. ADDED TO THEIR CONCERN HAS BEEN THE ECONOMIC CRUNCH WITH ITS POCKETBOOK INTEREST AND A GROWTH OF CYNICISM OF SOME CITIZENS ABOUT PUBLIC BODIES GENERALLY.

SINCE THE EARLY 1960'S LABOR LEADERS HAVE FOUGHT HARD AND WON COLLECTIVE BARGAINING LAWS IN A MAJORITY OF THE STATES OF OUR NATION. IN STATES WHERE THEY WEREN'T ABLE TO PASS A LAW, THEY BROUGHT ABOUT DE FACTO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING IN AT LEAST, THE MAJOR CITIES ANYWAY. THEY MADE GREAT PUBLIC SECTOR BREAKTHROUGHS IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION, PARTICULARLY WITH THE TEACHERS. THEY ARE NOW HARD AT WORK ORGANIZING THE SCHOOL SUPPORTING SERVICES PERSONNEL.

IN UNION BARGAINING GOALS THEY HAVE GONE FAR BEYOND THE STANDARD SCOPE OF BARGAINING AS WAS TYPICALLY FOUND IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR. FOR THEM, WAGES, HOURS, AND OTHER CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT MEAN THAT THEY WANT TO BARGAIN, NOT ONLY SALARIES, AND FRINGE BENEFITS, BUT THEY WANT TO BARGAIN OTHER THINGS THAT HAVE HISTORICALLY BELONGED TO THE PEOPLE. THEY WANT TO LIMIT CLASS SIZE; THEY WANT TO DEFINE ORGANIZATION OF INSTRUCTION; THEY WANT TO LIMIT THE NUMBER OF SUPERVISORS WHO DIRECT AND COORDINATE EMPLOYEE'S WORK; THEY WANT TO BE SOLELY RESPONSIBLE FOR CURRICULUM DECISIONS WITHIN THE SCHOOL CENTER ITSELF; AND THEY WANT TO EVALUATE YOUR FELLOW TEACHERS AND

OTHER EMPLOYEES. THEY EVEN WANT TO ADD ARTICLES ABOUT SCHOOL CHILDREN, CUSTODIANS, SCHOOL LUNCH AND OTHER SCHOOL PERSONNEL IN THE TEACHER'S CONTRACT. IN SHORT, THEY ARE AFTER INCREASED SALARIES AND FRINGE BENEFITS, BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY, THEY ARE AFTER POWER. THEY WERE MORE SUCCESSFUL THAN THEY REALIZED IN ATTAINING THEIR GOALS - THEY ARE NOW CONTROLLING EDUCATIONAL POLICY.

THEY HAVE GONE TOO FAR. BECAUSE OF THEIR ACTIVITY IN THE POLITICAL ARENA, SCHOOL BOARDS HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO KEEP THE BALANCE REQUIRED BY THE PUBLIC. THEY HAVE REPLACED LEGISLATORS AND SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS WITH THEIR OWN SYMPATHIZERS. IN FLORIDA, WHERE WE ELECT 50 SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS (AN ARCHAIC PRACTICE BY THE WAY) THEY THREW OUT 30 OF THEM AT THE POLLS LAST NOVEMBER.

LET US SEE WHERE ALL THIS IS LEADING.

IT STARTED IN CHARLESTON, W. VA. IN LATE 1974. "IT" WAS A CONFRONTATION BETWEEN PARENTS AND EDUCATORS CONCERNING WHO SHOULD DECIDE WHICH TEXTBOOKS TO USE IN SCHOOLS. THE REAL ISSUE, THOUGH, WAS: WHO SHALL DECIDE WHAT AND HOW CHILDREN ARE TAUGHT? THERE WERE SHOOTINGS, BEATINGS AND A COAL MINER'S SYMPATHY STRIKE OVER THAT ONE.

PARENTS HAVE GROWN MORE DISSATISFIED WITH WHAT IS TAUGHT AND THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN GENERAL. PARENTS ARE CONCERNED ABOUT CHANGING VALUES AS WELL. THIS YEAR UNTIL JANUARY 1, SCHOOLS WERE CLOSED FOR WEEKS IN OHIO AND OREGON BECAUSE CITIZENS FAILED TO VOTE OPERATING MILLAGES.

BUT THE REAL PROBLEM, AS FAR AS LABOR LEADERS ARE CONCERNED IS

THAT THEY HAVE AROUSED THE PUBLIC. "IT MAY BE YOUR CONTRACT," A WASHINGTON, D.C. PARENT SCREAMED AT A TEACHER UNION LEADER, "BUT IT'S MY TAXES AND MY KID'S EDUCATION." COLLECTIVE BARGAINING WILL CONTINUE TO HAVE MORE EFFECTS ON THE COST AND QUALITY OF EDUCATION THAN ANY OTHER INNOVATION. A NEW BOOK CALLED "PARENTS UNITE" THE COMPLETE GUIDE FOR SHAKING UP YOUR CHILDREN'S SCHOOL" POINTS THE WAY FOR PARENTS. THIS POPULAR BOOK ADVISED PARENTS TO PROMOTE THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER TEACHER CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS. LET ME READ YOU A QUOTE FROM THIS BOOK:

> "THE APPEAL OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING TO TEACHER UNIONS STEMS FROM THE POWER WHICH THE PROCESS, AS DEVELOPED IN PRIVATE SECTOR INDUSTRY, GIVES THE LABOR SIDE. THERE'S ONE CRUCIAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN INDUSTRIAL COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AND WHAT HAPPENS IN MOST SCHOOL DISTRICTS. COLLECTIVE BARGAINING IN EDUCATION PITS THE PUBLIC INTEREST - WHAT'S BEST FOR CHILDREN - AGAINST A PRIVATE INTEREST - WHAT'S BEST FOR TEACHERS AS EMPLOYEES. IF BARGAINING IN EDUCATION WERE CONFINED MOSTLY TO ECONOMIC AREAS (WAGES AND FRINGES) AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES, IT COULD HARDLY BE A THREAT TO PUBLIC CONTROL OF EDUCATION, ALTHOUGH THE THREAT TO THE PUBLIC'S PURSE WOULD REMAIN SIGNIFICANT.
>
> BUT BARGAINING IN MANY COMMUNITIES IS NO LONGER LIMITED TO BREAD AND BUTTER ISSUES. TEACHER UNION OFFICIALS CONTEND THAT EVERYTHING, CLASS SIZE, HIRING AND FIRING AND

EVALUATING TEACHERS, ETC. - SHOULD BE NEGOTIABLE. WHEN EVERYTHING IS UP FOR GRABS AT THE BARGAINING TABLE THE PUBLIC IS SURELY THE LOSER. WHICH IS WHY MORE AND MORE ALERT PARENT GROUPS ARE ECHOING A TRADITIONAL BATTLE CRY OF SCHOOL BOARDS: KEEP EDUCATIONAL POLICY ISSUES OFF THE BARGAINING TABLE AND IN THE PUBLIC'S CONTROL."

PARENTS UNITE ADVISES PTA GROUPS TO CAREFULLY SCRUTINIZE ALL UNION CONTRACT DEMANDS FOR THEIR POTENTIAL EFFECTS ON COST, QUALITY OF EDUCATION, AND THE RUNNING OF THE SCHOOLS. IN DADE COUNTY FLORIDA, THE PTA HAS GONE A STEP FURTHER. THEY BROUGHT SUIT TO SIT AT THE BARGAINING TABLE TO REPRESENT CITIZENS AND CHILDREN, BECAUSE THE TEACHER'S UNION AND THE SCHOOL BOARD'S REPRESENTATIVE WAS NOT REPRESENTING THE PUBLIC.

A NATIONAL ORGANIZATION IS PRESENTLY GROWING VERY RAPIDLY. THIS ORGANIZATION, THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR CITIZENS IN EDUCATION, (NCCE) ALSO HAS A POLICY ON COLLECTIVE BARGAINING. THAT ORGANIZATION ENDORSES COLLECTIVE BARGAINING, BUT STATES:

"THE PRIVATE SECTOR MODEL; (OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING) IS, IN OUR JUDGMENT, INAPPROPRIATE TO THE PUBLIC SECTOR. LOCAL SCHOOL BOARDS HAVE LESS ECONOMIC LEVERAGE THAN INDUSTRIAL MANAGEMENT. MOREOVER, CLOSED BARGAINING MEETINGS AND CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENTS AFFECTING PUBLIC POLICY REMOVE THE CITIZEN FROM THE PUBLIC POLICY PROCESS WHICH IS UNNECESSARY AND UNDEMOCRATIC." THE NCCE HAD 85 AFFILIATES IN JANUARY, 1976 AND 175 IN NOVEMBER, 1976.

THE NCCE IS NOT ALONE. THE INSTITUTE FOR RESPONSIVE EDUCATION HAS BEEN FORMED IN BOSTON, AND NOW IS ENGAGED IN RESEARCH TO FACILITATE THE INVOLVEMENT OF CITIZENS IN EDUCATION. OTHER GROUPS ARE FORMING IN CALIFORNIA, FLORIDA AND MANY OTHER STATES. IN SEVERAL OF THESE STATES, LEGISLATURES HAVE BEEN PERSUADED TO ADOPT LEGISLATION REQUIRING SCHOOL CITIZEN'S ADVISORY COMMITTEES FOR EACH SCHOOL.

ORGANIZED VOTER INTEREST CONTINUES TO GROW WITH RESPECT TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT. IN SEATTLE, VOTERS SUPPORTED THE MAYOR IN A FIGHT WITH LOCAL FIRE FIGHTERS. IN SAN FRANCISCO, VOTERS REGISTERED THEIR UNHAPPINESS WITH A WAGE SETTLEMENT BY CASTING THEIR VOTES IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION IN A CHARTER REFERENDUM. IN NEW YORK, VOTERS SUPPORTED A CHARTER AMENDMENT TO ACQUIRE A FULL STATEMENT OF WAGE AND BENEFIT SETTLEMENTS. AT THE STATE LEVEL, CALIFORNIA REQUIRED THAT, IN EDUCATION, BOTH TEACHER UNION AND MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS BE MADE PUBLIC SEVERAL DAYS BEFORE BARGAINING COULD BEGIN. IN OREGON, STUDENTS WERE GIVEN THE RIGHT TO TAKE PART IN "MEET AND CONFER" NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN COLLEGES AND NEGOTIATORS. IN FLORIDA, THE LEGISLATURE PASSED A LAW PLACING A STUDENT ON THE UNIVERSITIES BOARD OF REGENTS. THIS BILL WAS VETOED BY THE GOVERNOR BUT WILL BE BACK NEXT SESSION. IN ISOLATED AREAS ALL OVER THE COUNTRY, SCHOOL BOARDS ARE RECEIVING PRESSURE TO OPEN UP COLLECTIVE BARGAINING SESSIONS - PARTICULARLY THOSE CONCERNING THE DISBURSAL OF MONEY, CURRICULUM, ORGANIZATION OF INSTRUCTION, TEXTBOOKS AND IN OTHER AREAS.

THE TIME HONORED WAYS OF CARRYING OUR COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

AS PRACTICED IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR ARE BEING CHALLENGED AS THEY AFFECT THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN, AND THE SPENDING OF TAXPAYER'S MONEY. WHILE SOME HAVE WELCOMED THE EVIDENCE OF GROWING PUBLIC INTEREST, OTHERS HAVE BEEN CONCERNED ABOUT POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS AND DELAYS RESULTING FROM CHANGED PROCEDURES.

THE FIRST STATE TO REQUIRE THAT COLLECTIVE BARGAINING IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR TO BE CONDUCTED IN THE OPEN, OR IN A FISHBOWL, WAS FLORIDA. WHEN THE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING LAW FOR PUBLIC EMPLOYEES WAS APPROVED IN 1974, ONE OF THE PROVISIONS STATED THAT ALL NEGOTIATIONS SESSIONS MUST BE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC. IN ADDITION, THE STATES' PUBLIC DOCUMENTS LAW REQUIRED THAT ALL PROPOSALS, COUNTER-PROPOSALS OR INFORMATIONAL DATA PLACED ON THE BARGAINING TABLE MUST ALSO BE MADE AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC. THE STATE SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION, WHILE ACTIVELY LOBBYING AGAINST THE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING LAW, SUPPORTED THE CONCEPT OF OPEN BARGAINING. THE HISTORY OF THE SUNSHINE LAW NO DOUBT HAD A BEARING UPON THE POSITION OF THE SCHOOL BOARD ASSOCIATION FOR FISHBOWL BARGAINING, AND, IN ADDITION, THE STRONG PUBLIC DOCUMENTS LAW HAD ALREADY REQUIRED THAT ALL OF OUR DOCUMENTS, BUDGETS, CORRESPONDENCE, ETC. BE OPEN TO ALL COMERS. SO IT WAS BELIEVED THAT WE HAD NOTHING TO LOSE AND EVERYTHING TO GAIN! THE SCHOOL BOARD ASSOCIATION HAD PREVIOUSLY OPPOSED THE SUNSHINE LAW, BUT THROUGH THE YEARS HAD LEARNED TO LIVE WITH IT, AND HAD NOW COME TO EVEN SUPPORT IT.

TWO YEARS OF BARGAINING IN THE SHINSHINE HAVE NOW PASSED. HERE ARE SOME OF THE LESSONS THAT WE HAVE LEARNED FROM IT.

FIRST, A SURVEY OF THE SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS INDICATES THAT THE MAJORITY OF THEM PREFER OPEN BARGAINING.

HERE WERE THEIR EXPRESSED REASONS:

1. UNION DEMANDS: SCHOOL BOARDS ARE RECEIVING FROM 65 TO 120 PAGES OF TEACHER UNION DEMANDS EACH YEAR. UNION OR ASSOCIATION LEADERS BOAST OF BEING ABLE TO COME UP WITH FROM 700-800 SEPARATE DEMANDS IN THESE PAGES. THEY ARE THE TYPICAL BOILER PLATE TYPE DEMANDS BEING TURNED OUT FROM THE NEA OR AFT HOME OFFICES. ONE LOCAL IN JACKSONVILLE EVEN FAILED TO REMOVE THE DEMAND FOR CLOSET SPACE FOR TEACHERS TO STORE THEIR GALOSHES! IN FLORIDA? AN EXAMINATION OF THESE DEMANDS INDICATED, CLEARLY, THAT THERE ARE FEW, IF ANY, OF THE DEMANDS THAT MENTION OR EVEN REFER TO CHILDREN OR THEIR EDUCATION. ALL OF THEM ARE ORIENTED FOR TEACHER WELFARE - LESS WORK AND MORE PAY.

BOARD MEMBERS IN FLORIDA FOUND THAT SUNSHINE BARGAINING EXPOSED THE TEACHER ASSOCIATION DEMANDS FOR WHAT THEY REALLY WERE. HERE ARE SOME TYPICAL COMMENTS FROM SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS:

"I PREFER TO KEEP THE NEGOTIATIONS PROCESS OPEN BECAUSE IT'S EASIER TO REVEAL THE RIDICULOUS POSITION OF THE UNION."

"SUNSHINE IS ON THE SIDE OF ADMINISTRATION, NOT LABOR."

"FROM COMMENTS AND PHONE CALLS THAT I HAVE RECEIVED FROM THE GENERAL PUBLIC, THEY HAVE FAVORED THE BOARD'S POSITION IN COLLECTIVE BARGAINING. TO KEEP IT IN THE OPEN WILL KEEP THE PUBLIC BETTER INFORMED OF WHAT WE ARE ALREADY PROVIDING THE TEACHERS."

AND, "I PREFER SUNSHINE IN THIS AREA BECAUSE THE FTA AND OTHERS, ARE AWARE OF REQUESTS AND FACTS. PRIOR TO THIS, THE UNION SAID ANY-

THING IN THE PRESS TO THEIR ADVANTAGE AND MOST OF THE TIME NOT TRUE. SUNSHINE DETERS THIS BEHAVIOR."

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS, TWO TO ONE, PREFERRED SUNSHINE BARGAINING.

HOW ABOUT THE SUPERINTENDENTS? UNDER OUR COLLECTIVE BARGAINING LAW, THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OR THE SUPERINTENDENT IS LEGALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR COLLECTIVE BARGAINING. ON TOP OF THAT THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF SUPERINTENDENTS ARE ELECTED OFFICIALS - 50 OUT OF 67. WE SURMISED IN THE BEGINNING THAT THE SUPERINTENDENTS WOULD FAVOR CLOSED BARGAINING, IN THE INTERESTS OF EFFICIENCY. WE WERE WRONG. AT A RATE OF NEARLY TWO TO ONE, THE SUPERINTENDENTS FAVORED SUNSHINE BARGAINING.

HERE ARE SOME OF THEIR COMMENTS:

"WHEN ONE CONSIDERS THE RIGHT OF THE PUBLIC TO COME AND HEAR HOW THE BARGAINING IS CONDUCTED, THIS CASE PROBABLY OUTWEIGHS THE FACT THAT BARGAINING IS PROBABLY A BIT MORE EFFECTIVE IN SECRET."

"IF THE PUBLIC HAS A RIGHT TO INFORMATION ON PERSONNEL APPOINTMENTS, BUDGETS, CURRICULUM DECISIONS, AND PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION SITES IN REGARD TO PUBLIC EDUCATION, SURELY THEY HAVE A RIGHT TO DECISIONS RELATING TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING."

AS WAS EXPECTED, THE CHIEF NEGOTIATORS PREFERRED TO HAVE BARGAINING IN THE SHADE. THESE FOLKS WERE THE FRONT LINE FORCES. HERE IS WHAT ONE NEGOTIATOR SAID:

"TEACHERS COME IN MASS TO THE FIRST BARGAINING SESSION. THE ROOM HOLDS ABOUT 25 PEOPLE OTHER THAN THE BARGAINING TEAMS. SUN-

SHINE HINDERS AGREEMENT. IT ENCOURAGES POSTURING. THE OBSERVERS APPLAUDED THE STATEMENTS OF THEIR REPRESENTATIVES AND AUDIBLY EXPRESSED THEIR DISSATISFACTION WITH THE BOARD'S TEAM. AFTER THE FIRST FEW MEETINGS, THE TEACHERS STOPPED SHOWING UP."

WHILE MOST OF THE NEGOTIATORS WERE GREATLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE PRESENCE OF THE PRESS AND OTHERS DURING THE FIRST YEAR OF BARGAINING, A CONSIDERABLE CHANGE WAS REPORTED THE SECOND YEAR. MOST OF THOSE INVOLVED REPORTED THAT SUNSHINE BARGAINING NEITHER HELPED NOR HINDERED THE PROCESS OF NEGOTIATIONS. ALTHOUGH THEIR WERE STILL SOME REPORTS OF "POSTURING" FOR THE PUBLIC OR FOR THE PRESS, THE REPORTS INDICATED MUCH LESS OF THIS TYPE OF ACTIVITY.

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS, SUPERINTENDENTS, AND NEGOTIATORS OPPOSED TO SUNSHINE BARGAINING GENERALLY REPORTED THE SAME TYPE PROBLEMS. THEY STATED THAT BARGAINING IN THE PUBLIC RESTRICTED DIALOGUE BECAUSE THERE IS NO WAY TO TAKE BACK ANY STATEMENT MADE AND THEN PUBLISHED BY THE MEDIA REGARDING A POSITION."

THEY ALSO REPORTED: "THE PROCESS TAKES LONGER - EMPLOYEES USE SUNSHINE BARGAINING AS A FORUM TO GET ALL PETTY ITEMS IN PRINT."

FURTHER: "MANY TEACHERS ATTENDED MEETINGS - BOOING AND HISSING - CREATING DISTURBANCES - AND, VERY FEW, IF ANY, OTHER OF THE PUBLIC ATTENDED."

AND, FINALLY, "THE GLARE OF PUBLICITY TENDS TO HARDEN LINES WHICH CAN BE COMPROMISED ONLY WITH DIFFICULTY."

BY NO MEANS, HOWEVER, WERE ALL NEGOTIATORS OPPOSED TO SUNSHINE BARGAINING. THIRTY-FIVE PERCENT PREFERRED OPEN BARGAINING EVEN

THOUGH THEY ADMITTED THAT "FISHBOWL" BARGAINING INHIBITED COMPROMISE, LENGTHENED THE BARGAINING PROCESS, WAS MORE EXPENSIVE, CREATED CONTROVERSY AND FOSTERED UNNECESSARY ADVERSARY RELATIONS.

SINCE COMMON CAUSE, THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR CITIZENS IN EDUCATION, THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS AND OTHERS ARE ACTIVELY ENDORSING AND SUPPORTING OPENING UP COLLECTIVE BARGAINING SO THAT CITIZENS AND TAXPAYERS MAY MONITOR PUBLIC EXPENDITURES AND UNION CONTROL OVER THE SCHOOLS, HOW HAS THE PUBLIC RESPONDED IN A STATE WHERE THEY HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO WITNESS NEGOTIATIONS IN EDUCATION FIRST-HAND? THE ANSWER IN ONE WORD IS "DISMAL." HERE ARE SOME RECENT COMMENTS FROM THE TABLE NEGOTIATORS WITH RESPECT TO CITIZEN ATTENDANCE AT THE BARGAINING SESSIONS:

"A COUPLE OF PARENTS CAME ONCE OR TWICE."

"TEN OR FIFTEEN TEACHERS CAME TO THE SESSIONS REGULARLY."

"NOBODY ATTENDED EXCEPT FOR THE NEGOTIATORS."

"ABOUT 5 TEACHERS ATTENDED TEN PERCENT OF THE TIME."

"A FEW TEACHERS ATTENDED DURING THE SUMMER SESSIONS."

AND WHAT ABOUT THE NEWS MEDIA? WERE THE CITIZEN'S LEAVING COVERAGE OF THE MEETING TO THE PRESS?

HERE ARE SOME RESPONSES WITH RESPECT TO PRESS COVERAGE:

"THE PRESS USUALLY ATTENDED OUR SESSIONS."

"ALL SESSIONS WERE COVERED BY OUR LOCAL NEWSPAPER."

PRESS WAS IN REGULAR ATTENDANCE."

"THE PRESS MISREPRESENTED US SINCE THEY DIDN'T KNOW WHAT WAS GOING ON." TEN OF THE DISTRICTS REPORTED THAT NO PRESS WAS IN ATTEND-

ANCE. WE ARE SAFE IN SAYING THAT IN ALL OF OUR LARGE SCHOOL SYSTEMS THE PRESS ATTENDED EACH COLLECTIVE BARGAINING SESSION AND REPORTED WHAT NEWS THAT THEY COULD GLEAN FROM THE DISCUSSIONS. WE CAN ALSO SAY THAT IN MOST OF THE MEDIUM TO SMALL DISTRICTS NEWS COVERAGE WAS SPARSE OR DEPENDED UPON ANTICIPATED CONFRONTATIONS.

AS SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS AND ADMINISTRATORS MANY OF YOU WILL FACE THE QUESTION OF GOLDFISH BOWL BARGAINING IN THE FUTURE. THE EDUCATION COMMISSION OF THE STATES CALLS THE SUNSHINE MOVEMENT A NATIONWIDE PHENOMENON. WHETHER THE MOVEMENT STOPS AT BEING MERE OBSERVERS AT THE TABLE IN THE FUTURE IS QUESTIONABLE. AS WITH OUR PTA DEMAND IN MIAMI, MORE AND MORE CITIZENS AND PARENTS WILL MAKE DEMANDS OF THEIR OWN. THERE MAY BE A MOVE TO HAVE A MORE MEANINGFUL ROLE IN THE BARGAINING PROCESS IN THE FUTURE. THE NCCE REPORTS THAT EVENTUALLY THE PROCESS OF NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD BE EXPANDED TO INCLUDE PARENTS AND STUDENTS, AS WELL AS TEACHERS AND MANAGERS. AT WHAT POINT DOES GOVERNMENT SACRIFICE EFFICIENCY IN LABOR RELATIONS FOR THE HONORED GOALS OF OPENNESS AND PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC PROCESSES? THE CITIZEN'S MOVEMENT WILL CONTINUE TO GROW AND AS STATED IN "PARENTS UNITE" PARENTAL APATHY WILL RISE UP AGAINST THE "BUREAUCRACY IN EDUCATION, WITH ITS DESIRE TO BE LEFT ALONE." THIS ACTIVIST MANUAL ADVISES PARENTS TO "KEEP EDUCATIONAL POLICY OFF THE BARGAINING TABLE AND IN THE PUBLIC'S CONTROL. PARENT GROUPS ARE URGED TO "STUDY, CAREFULLY, EACH CLAUSE IN A COLLECTIVE BARGAINING CONTRACT TO SAFEGUARD THE PEOPLE'S CONTROL RATHER THAN VESTED INTEREST CONTROL."

IN FLORIDA, PARENTS HAVE NOT YET CAUGHT ON TO THEIR NEW WEAPON - THE OPEN COLLECTIVE BARGAINING ROOM. TAX INCREASES IN FLORIDA FOR THE LAST 22 YEARS HAVE SHOWN THE LOWEST PERCENTAGE INCREASE IN RELATION TO PERSONAL INCOME AMONG THE 50 STATES. AS TAXES INCREASE TO FUND NEGOTIATED AGREEMENTS, HOWEVER, WE CAN LOOK FORWARD TO MORE VISITS FROM PARENTS AND CITIZENS AT THE BARGAINING TABLE.

THE TEACHER UNIONS ARE VIOLENTLY AGAINST OPEN BARGAINING. ONE UNION STATED "THE AFT SUPPORTS THE TRADITIONAL MANNER OF BARGAINING. BETTER AGREEMENTS WILL BE REACHED SOONER WHEN BARGAINING IS REMOVED FROM THE CONSTRUCTIONS OF THE SUNSHINE LAW." THE UNION'S ADAMENT OPPOSITION OF SUNSHINE BARGAINING AUTOMATICALLY REQUIRES THAT I TAKE A SECOND LOOK AT IT. IF THEY ARE SO AGAINST IT MAYBE THERE'S SOMETHING GOOD ABOUT IT, AFTER ALL.

NOW HOW ABOUT YOU? IF YOUR SCHOOL DISTRICTS' BUDGET IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC; IF YOUR PERSONNEL POLICIES ARE UP-TO-DATE, FAIR AND EQUITABLY ADMINISTERED; IF YOUR BOARD MEETINGS ARE OPEN AND YOUR DECISIONS OPENLY ARRIVED AT, IF YOU PERMIT CITIZENS TO HAVE THEIR SAY, IF YOU ARE RESPONSIVE TO THE PEOPLE'S NEEDS, THEN PERHAPS, JUST PERHAPS, YOU WILL HAVE NOTHING TO LOSE BY GOLDFISH BOWL BARGAINING.